



Oasis Splash!

Childcare

Grace Village



This last two months have been quite eventful in many ways, one day we took delivery of one month old Tamrat, a wee HIV + darling being cared for by Mulualem and another new house mother Tsega, then the following week little two month old Deborah pictured above, came after being abandoned at the bus station, she is being cared for by two previous fistula housemothers Wubete and Birky.

Our Sammy was found trying to drown himself in a barrel of water! He was disturbing everyone and we were concerned about him because here we have no walls around us and the cliff and lake a constant danger to someone so unstable. We do miss him and we phone often to see how he is managing. He has his good days and bad ones... Please keep praying for him.

Community Care

The children are followed and visited in their homes. One of the childcare employees ran off with the money that he should have paid to the children. We are grateful that replacement funding was made from a donor and the children will not suffer for this terrible act. We have interviewed a young man who was himself an orphan who will fill in the personnel gap.

Refugee Care

News has just come that the agreement with United Nations High Commission for Refugees has been signed; now we wait for the Ethiopian government corresponding agency to approve and sign this agreement. Then we can start providing child protection at a refugee camp some ways away from here. We have found a wonderful lady from Addis Ababa to help us run this project, she is capable and dynamic and just what we need.

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Health

Bethel Centre

Several Obstetric Fistula patients have come through the Fistula Waiting Area, one had both a rectal and bladder hole, she was homesick so she has gone home and has returned and been referred to Mekelle for surgery. Others have come and gone home and they will return later nearer the time for surgery. One woman stayed the six months between her two operations rather than go home still wet or leaking.

Our health extension worker has completed her training and this month we will start the outreach programme. We await the latter of approval from the local authority before starting the initial trip of meeting government officers. The next phase will be to identify remote areas where we can start providing delivery kits, teaching about clean deliveries and identify women with childbirth injuries.

Special Project

The people with the unidentified liver disease are still present and we are running three clinics in three very remote areas of the area, we check between 150 and 200 people each week, supplying them with protein rich complementary food such as Soya beans / flour, as well as barley and sugar. The final cause is still unconfirmed but we pray to soon have some results from the involved experts from around the globe.

Development

The first of the women headed household projects is about ready to be handed over to the women themselves to manage and run and gain profit. They are busy growing vegetables and selling them and appear happy with their work.

At Grace Village we are developing the farm too, planning for more crops in the rainy season and working towards more self sufficiency. One of the cows gave birth to a beautiful male calf which has brought joy to all the children too.

Personnel

Good and caring staff remains a challenge for Oasis Foundation Ethiopia. Few want to come to such a remote part of Ethiopia. Then because it is far away they believe this justifies a large salary. So over the past year we have learned our lesson and continue to do so. This is to find well qualified staff and pay them well and to ask around for good people in Shire with experience and employ them. These are the tactics we are using. So we have engaged an excellent Child Protection Officer for the refugee work; recently a young man from town of whom everyone speaks highly to be cashier and receptionist and now the community care worker who will start next week. We have a local girl working in the home for HIV + children, her name is Tsega (Grace); so we know have the village named Grace, our senior girl is called Grace and now the third Grace has come, we are blessed! The three graces are here.

Congratulations!

Our Assistant Director Tadesse Haile Mariam has obtained his Master's in Rural Development from London University. This represents an enormous amount of work over the past few years and brings the required credentials to the leadership of Oasis Foundation Ethiopia.

Sadness

It is not possible to work with the vulnerable and marginalised without facing death. Since January we have lost two of our housemothers to pneumonia due to AIDS. One was much loved Genet who was a previous Fistula patient as well as HIV / AIDS patient, the children loved her dearly and she them; when she was dying she said in far away Addis Ababa "I would have loved to see the children and hold them in my arms just once more". She is much missed and we are sad she could not see 'her children' once more. The second was Senait, Genet's replacement who came and worked only two weeks and complained of breathing difficulties and who while planning to send her back to her mother in Addis Ababa, died suddenly. He body was accompanied by our Assistant Director back to Addis Ababa to her family who buried her there.

Buildings

We started with great enthusiasm to build the multipurpose hall, kindergarten and library and then had to stop because we ran out of water. There is enough for our consumption but not for building and mixing cement etc. So we wait.

The lake for water storage is being relined, the plans for a second reservoir is about to start to ensure adequate water for this season next year. We pray that by this time next year we will have completed most of the building projects.



Our Donors

Every week we are touched by packages that arrive with cardigans, baby clothes, children's clothes, pens, pencils, notepads, hair ribbons and elastic and toys that bring smiles and

laughter to our wonderful children. The extras go out into the community and bring smiles to the children living in tragic circumstances. Watching small children wearing sweaters and caps sent until they fall off their bodies is what you dear friends are doing and we thank God for you all!

Last month partners from Switzerland came and we signed an agreement for three years whereby they will help us with fistula care, health education as well as the car they have given us! Various new child sponsors have started to help sponsor community children from USA and Australia.

Special note

Two kilogramme parcels of simple items like underwear, socks, hair bands, bras for our teenage girls, shorts for the wee lads and lassies to play in, pictures to post on their walls, fun pillow cases (small square pillows), and children's aprons for kindergarten are all so useful.

Your gifts are precious to our children and people here in North Western Zone of Tigray – thank you so much!

Ruth C. Kennedy for all!